

LAMBDA

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Atwood visits Laurentian

Writer celebrates birthday in Sudbury

BY CALLAM RODYA

I have long been strangely apathetic towards literature. I am a theatre student, so I read dozens of plays every year. But the novel is not something I have ever fundamentally embraced. To be sure, there are a few choice literary gems that I compulsively reread almost annually, but they are few.

Queue the irony of sending me to interview one of the most revered and celebrated literary figures of modern history.

It is 8 a.m. on Thursday morning, Nov. 18. I haven't slept much. Not only am I scheduled to interview Margaret Atwood in about two hours, I have a show opening that evening. I had woken up several times in the night, in a panic, and found myself relentlessly reviewing the notes and questions I had prepared.

You see, beyond what my research over the past weeks had gleaned, I know little about the woman I am about to encounter. I have never read her books. I have never seen her speak. I know her only as the renowned Canadian author, and so I hardly feel prepared.

By 9:30, I am on Maki Avenue, a street I used to live on during my childhood, one of Sudbury's most affluent. I arrive at the home of Shannon Hengen, professor of Canadian and women's literature at Laurentian. Shannon and her husband, Karl, were close friends of my mother's during her time as a professor of Theatre Arts at Thorneloe, and so I knew them as a child. We exchange pleasantries, and I am ushered into a den for a private screening of *In the Wake of the Flood*, a documentary film following Margaret Atwood on an international book tour in 2009 by filmmaker Ron Mann.

It's a quick watch, at only 48 minutes. I find myself instantly drawn in - not only does the film follow Ms. Atwood to various readings and events, it also takes her off the tour path to places like a community garden in Kingston, ON, Stanley Park in Vancouver, and finally, to our very own Sudbury, ON.

She is also a Mac user, if anyone is interested.

The idea of Margaret Atwood celebrating her birthday in Sudbury of all places had baffled me from the start. Turns out, Ms. Atwood has a great affinity for

our little crater. You see, Sudbury was once a barren moon-esque landscape, the result of decades of ill-conceived smelting techniques like roaster beds, which literally destroyed the natural ecology of the area. However, over the past 40-some years, the area has been almost completely rehabilitated and today, Sudbury is a model for environmental turnaround.

As Ms. Atwood says, if Sudbury can do it, anywhere can. This is why she chooses to spend her birthday in our fair city.

I am offered a latte and sit by the fire that Karl has just built in the fireplace. I wait. By this time, I care little about Ms. Atwood's literary prowess. I don't care about her fame and probable fortune. If the film I have just seen depicts Ms. Atwood as anything, it is as an ardent environmentalist through and through, and that is what now interests me.

I have my thesis for the interview, and it puts me at ease.

At last, Ms. Atwood arrives. She is dressed in black, a small woman, with big, curly grey hair, and stark, dull-blue eyes. She appears tired, yet somewhat frantic and needs contact lens solution. I cower for a bit before approaching her. We shake hands, and sit. In the background, Shannon and Karl begin preparing a birthday lunch. I pull out my recorder, and we're off.

It is her birthday - 71 years old. I ask her how she feels.

"The same as yesterday," she answers without a beat. I laugh. She laughs with me. The ice is broken.

I ask her how she feels she has changed with age. She's gotten older, she replies, indicative of her matter of fact way of speaking that I will quickly become familiar with.

"You've got two choices," she tells me. "You can get older, or you can die. I chose to get older."

I ask her about her father, who was a prominent entomologist when she was growing up. In the film, she takes about how he was warning of all of the environmental issues that we talk about today. My question is, why didn't anybody listen?

"They have from time to time," she says. "People are working away like crazy on alternate technologies and green technologies and they are making great progress. You would be



Photo supplied

amazed at the kinds of things they're working on."

"The thing is, it is a race against time and national governments are not going to be the first in," she explains. "If you have ever been with a group of people that want to go skinny dipping in April, nobody wants to be first in. The others will laugh at them while they scream."

Our conversation will be peppered with analogies like this one. But Ms. Atwood raises a valid point. The reason government is so reluctant to make significant strides on environmental issues is because the outlook is typically terribly pessimistic.

"To get those national governments all lined up together is just like herding cattle," she continues. "Nobody wants to go first."

She says the real steps are going to have to come from local governments and citizen pressure. The issue is also an economic one.

"In the short term, you do have to invest money," she says. "In the long term, you do save money. The problem is, we're not very good long-term thinkers."

"It's no good telling people 'uh oh, here comes climate change,'"

she says. "People will say 'okay, if we're doomed, I'm going partying!' Unless you present an alternative method of behavior to being doomed - either you can be doomed or you can do this - it doesn't work."

In the film, she discusses the idea that it is not enough to present facts on an issue. Unless people have an emotional connection to it, they will be by and large apathetic. She explains it simply, by asking if I ever had pets as a child. I tell her I did. She asks how I felt towards them. I tell her I loved them.

"Well, there you go," she says. "We love our nature pals. Why is there such a huge market in stuffed animals? It's not stuffed people."

Ms. Atwood goes on to explain that society largely unteaches the natural inclination to be emotionally attached to things. As such, it becomes more difficult for people to develop that attachment later than life, particularly towards issues.

"You don't necessarily have to consciously teach people to connect," she says. "You just have to put them in the environment and make sure they don't drown."

"We've spent this much time living in nature," she says, pointing to opposite ends of the room. She then raises her pinky finger. "And we've spent this much time living in condos. The condo is not our natural environment."

Ironically, Ms. Atwood and her partner, Graeme Gibson, live in Toronto. I ask her if she believes cities are sustainable.

"If you took all the people in cities and tried to sprinkle them over the natural environment, that just wouldn't work," she says. "We're way beyond that point. Our world population is now so ginormous that cities are what we have. We can't go back to being hunter-gatherers. It is beyond the ability of the natural world to sustain every living person."

There is a scene in *In the Wake of the Flood* that has Ms. Atwood strolling through a community vegetable garden in Kingston, where food is grown without the use of farm machinery or pesticides. Ms. Atwood asks her guide when they are going to bring back horses to do the plowing. I ask her what she thinks people need to do, or if we need to take a collective step back.

"Well, that may be forced upon us," she says gravely. "If the world were to run out of oil tomorrow, there would be the most unutterable social chaos. It would be just totally mayhem and a complete meltdown."

However, she says by the time we do actually run out of oil, we may have already burned so much of it that the atmosphere will no longer support human life.

"Chemistry and physics don't negotiate," she says. "We are living in a time where we have some choices. But the more we don't act, the more choices will be removed from us."

I ask her if the arts need to play a significant role in activism, particularly on the environment.

"It's no use telling the arts what to do," she replies. "Governments and political parties and people with ideologies are always trying to tell the arts what to do and it never works. The arts do what they do."

The second part of Lambda's feature on Margaret Atwood will appear in the Dec. 9 issue.

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Criticizing and policing ourselves

BY ED VAILLEUX

There was a time when I would never have critiqued other media outlets in print.

That time, of complacency and shaking my head but not commenting, has passed.

Local media exists to serve its readers. I am one of those readers.

I know many reporters in the city on a personal level, which can make it more difficult to be objective.

I've experienced, firsthand, the hardship of writing about colleagues.

I've had a reporter give me the cold shoulder at a presser, after telling the organizers of a conference we were "good friends" a week earlier.

There's an ugly side to the business.

We put politicians, administrators and businesspeople under the microscope everyday.

Yet, when our work, or our name comes under criticism, we can't take it. We sulk and berate the source to everyone in earshot.

We shout out all kinds of fallacies in argument, like attacking the person's credentials or political stripes. We challenge anything but the issue they bring up.

I've had my work criticized, rightly and wrongly. Sometimes it was justified and sometimes the person was in the wrong. And I reacted terribly on plenty of accounts.

When I started my first blog, called Ed the Journalist, it was to give readers a glimpse into the business. I wanted to provide understanding and knowledge on how newsrooms and reporting worked.

The biggest surprise came from the reaction of other reporters and others in the business. Some hated it. Some went to great lengths to let everyone know how wrong they thought I was, including (but not limited to) saying I would never work for a Sun media paper or never be hired by their paper, specifically.

In the end, it's very childish behaviour.

Our job is keep people in a position of power in check (and inform the public), when you break it down.

So, as it's said, who watches the watchmen?

We go around trying to keep politicians on the straight and narrow, trying to keep administrators and governments in check, but who makes sure we're doing our jobs properly?

Editors? Sure.

Editors are the first step in the process. But they only police reporters, technically. There is no one to oversee an editor.

Publishers, you say? Not likely.

Keep in mind, the Star has Bruce Cowden as publisher currently. Cowden put in more than 18 years as everything from a reporter to the managing editor at the North Bay Nugget. He knows his way around a pen and notepad, I'm sure.

Publishers hire editors, and especially managing editors, to keep the newspaper on task. It's not their job, on a daily basis, in the grand scheme of things.

So then, who does the job fall to, of making sure newspapers report for us in an unbiased, useful way?

Well, the job falls to us.

It's the responsibility of other reporters and the public to keep media outlets in line.

Many a night have been spent, by reporters from most newsrooms in the city, after council meetings, or on weekends, critiquing our profession.

We sit around, order food or drinks (yes, we're human) and we hammer away at ethical and professional questions.

Did the reporter overstep their

boundaries?

Was the election covered well enough, and in an unbiased way? Someone has to take us to task.

Even our paper, the Lambda, needs its critics.

We've had people flame us, and we appreciate it.

It doesn't always sit well, and it's hard to take criticism when you put your heart into something and it gets targeted, but it makes us a better paper.

The best way to keep our reporting honest and relevant is to self-reflect, re-read our stories and issues and listen to criticism.

The Lambda has grown this year and we're trying to provide the best product we can in our limited working hours -- between studying, writing essays and having a social life.

If our coverage of something wasn't to your liking, or you have a news tip for us, get in touch with one of our editors or with our general manager.

That being said, criticism should always be welcome in this business, for our own good.

Ed Veilleux is Lambda's news editor, and is a former city council reporter in Sudbury.

The politics of profit: critiquing media coverage

BY ROBERT BECKETT

Last issue I outlined the Conservative ties between the Sudbury Star and the 'Matichuk for Mayor' campaign, so the revelation that Réjean Grenier, owner of Le Voyager newspaper and local Liberal hopeful, helped Matichuk during her campaign, serves as a useful reminder that media corruption is non-partisan. Corporate media supports corporate-friendly candidates and Matichuk's 'open for business' position is as friendly as it gets. Party politics come a distant second to this deeper alignment.

Add in the tens of thousands of dollars Matichuk spent on advertising and hiring the public relations services of both Paul Demers and Conway Fraser, and you have a microcosm of many modern elections. This is the simple undemocratic truth unspeakable by the mass media - and the politicians they put in power.

A situation worsened by the corrosive spate of mergers and leveraged buyouts that have defined media corporations for the last two decades. The Sudbury Star has been bought and sold three times in little over a decade, each sale resulting in debt-ridden new owners reducing local investigative reporting because it is too financially (and politically) costly. This fate has befallen almost every major newspaper creating demoralized newsrooms eternally forced to do more with less.

By 2003, this systemic, hollowing process had already so cowed the press that not one major outlet would offer any resistance to Bush's deceptive invasion of Iraq. The release of Bush's new book, 'Decision Points', forces us to again confront his Big Lie technique where the

sheer enormity of a lie works in its favour if not widely resisted.

Bush openly instigated an aggressive invasion, 'the supreme international crime' as defined by the Nuremberg tribunals, and now boasts, in his new book, of ordering a variety of tortures including water-boarding. Referring to Bush as a war criminal is not rhetoric. The U.S. Attorney General has declared that water-boarding is torture as a matter of law. In Canada, Bush is a criminal according to the 'Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act', a law recently used to convict a Rwandan businessman living in Quebec.

The RCMP recognized this law's applicability to Bush when they declined to arrest Bush during a speaking tour by stating he was a transient visitor to Canada and not a permanent resident. The flimsiness of this technicality shows that the RCMP could easily stop Bush from entering Canada with the proper public and political support - which brings us again to the corporate media, because at no point in human history has public and political will been so mediated by mass media.

Unfortunately, the media's near total complicity in allowing Bush's Big Lies to go unchallenged makes these corporations the single largest obstacle to beginning war crime prosecutions against Bush. The single strongest explanation for this servility is that the Bush presidency meant media ownership deregulation and high corporate tax cuts. It was a very, very corporate-friendly presidency.

When Sumer Redstone, a life long Democrat and owner of Viacom, was asked why he supported Bush in 2004 he responded, "I vote for Viacom

and a Republican Administration is better for media companies than a Democratic one". This is not a conspiracy, it is simply business.

The depths of this unconscionable complicity are documented in a 2003 study of ABC, CBS, NBC and PBS newscasts, during the run up to the Iraq invasion. It revealed that of the 393 interviews conducted by these shows only three were with anti-war representatives. Throughout this time, half of the U.S. population was opposed to the invasion. During this same period, the Bush Administration told at least 935 documented lies to justify invading Iraq, few of which were seriously challenged by mainstream reporters.

A survey examining the six major network nightly news programs during the first three weeks of the invasion showed that only 3 percent of U.S. guests appearing in stories about Iraq expressed opposition to the war. Not a single show in the study conducted a sit-down interview with a person identified as being explicitly against the war. If the corporate media had hosted a debate which allowed peace advocates even 10% of the airtime allotted to pro-war advocates, the butchery in Iraq might have been stopped.

Instead those public officials, who serve private corporate interests, are not only protected by the media, but are rewarded by the business community when they leave office. Neither Bush nor Tony Blair could openly walk the countries they ruled without the threat of being physically attacked, but they have many friends in the hallways of corporate power. Tony Blair now serves as 'senior advisor' to banking behemoth JPMorgan

Chase and spent this year's Remembrance Day addressing a conference of toilet roll and disinfectant manufacturers, earning \$80,000 for a 40 minute speech. A similar fate likely awaits our own Prime Minister.

Bush's own image repair campaign was launched last year when he earned \$160,000 for making his first post-presidency speech to the Calgary business community. So successful was this outing that Bush repeated it in Toronto, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Montreal - receiving standing ovations in each venue from the mostly under-35, well-dressed crowds that attended. In total, the Canadian corporate community rewarded a mass-murder with almost a million dollars in speaking fees and all Canadians have paid nearly the same amount to provide mounted police and riot squads to protect Bush from the citizens who wish to arrest him.

During the mayoral election, Le Voyager and the Sudbury Star strongly supported Matichuk's attempt to censor fellow candidate David Popescu from debates. Their reasoning was that Popescu's Biblically-based calls for killing were so legally and morally repugnant that he did not deserve access to the power of the mass media.

I hope that someday the media finds the moral courage to apply this standard to the powerful as well as the lowly.

Writer's note: "Hobb Beckett is a cynic who lives in the woods and wrote this article for free."

Robert 'Hobb' Beckett is a sessional professor at Laurentian University. He teaches courses on media ethics, psychology and criminology.

Laurentian appoints new VP

McAuley to start Feb. 14

BY ED VEILLEUX

In February, Laurentian University's administration will be further reshaped. The university will appoint Carol McAuley as vice-president, administration of Laurentian University, effective February 14, 2011. "Laurentian is fortunate to (have) recruited such a talented, experienced and knowledgeable senior executive," LU President Dominic Giroux said. She "understands the university setting and knows well one of Laurentian's growth areas," he added. McAuley feels she is a perfect fit for her new position. "I bring a passion for education, a strong commitment to the quality of the student experience, focus on transparent, accountable practices, and an open mind." She added: "And a good dose of energy." As far as what her job will consist of, McAuley said she will "oversee, from an administrative perspective, all of the academic priorities of the university. As I understand ours is currently working with the faculties to update the academic plan which will guide the university through the next few years." Further, she added, "It will be my job to help ensure that the resources are there to support the academic vision of the university." McAuley is currently the associate director of education for the Simcoe County District School Board,

where she oversees an annual operating budget of more than \$500 million for this district of 6,000 permanent employees serving 50,000 students in 111 schools. In her current position, she is responsible for all administrative functions including finance, facilities, human resources and information technology. McAuley completed her Bachelor of Science in Agriculture at the University of Guelph in 1980. She received her C.A. designation in 1982. In terms of experience in the university sector, McAuley served for eight years on the Board of Governors of the University of Western Ontario. She also served as Vice-Chair of the Council of Chairs of Ontario Universities and on the National Association for University Board Chairs and Secretaries. The new hire hasn't spent much time in Sudbury, but said she "looks forward to making it my home." McAuley will replace Robert Bourgeois, who will be leaving the University in December after serving for four years as vice-president, administration (including eight months as acting president). Laurentian's executive director of financial services, Normand Lavallée, will serve as acting vice-president, administration from Dec. 24 to Feb. 11. (With files from Andy Veilleux) eddy_veilleux@hotmail.com

LU undergraduate structure modified

BY ANDY VEILLEUX

Laurentian University senate has approved a motion to modify the University's undergraduate degree structure.

The modified structure will grant students more freedom in planning their degrees, and allow them to get a more customized education, according to LU President Dominic Giroux.

Students were able to take a variety of courses, and unofficially take minors, but now their efforts can be formally recognized, according to Robert Kerr, Laurentian's vice-president, academic and provost.

"Previously, students could plan their electives in such a way as to represent the equivalent of a minor - a History student including an emphasis on English - but these would not be recognized on the degree, they were self-created," Kerr says.

"By departments formally creating minors then, for example, either a Sociology student or a Chemistry student could complete a minor in say Canadian History and have it recognized on their degree."

According to the Report of the Academic Planning Committee to the Regular Senate November 2010, the structure of undergraduate degrees has been undergoing a reexamination since Fall 2009.

The new degree structure is based off of the University of Western Ontario's degree structure.

Under the new structure a student can claim a specialization with 60 credits (66 if they are in

the Sciences), a major with 42 credits, a concentration with 36 credits (for three-year degrees only), and a minor with 24 credits.

According to the report, students can choose combinations of these modules in related fields, such as Physics and Chemistry, or even unrelated fields such as History and Music.

Kerr believes this new flexibility will go a long way towards giving students more control over their education.

"It will now change in terms of an increase in the number and type of options available and, therefore, the ability of students to build a program that more closely meets their future goals," he says.

Kerr says there is much interest among departments about the new degree structure, but student demand will be the watermark for its success.

"There is strong interest within the departments but, in the end, it will be student demand that will push the envelope," he says.

"It is certainly my impression that this is something eagerly awaited by students."

Universities are always trying to be on the edge of new technology, Kerr says.

He believes a more flexible degree program will allow the University to be more cutting edge than ever when it comes to meeting students' needs.

"What a more flexible degree structure does is allow the educational delivery model to become more flexible, to respond more quickly to changes

in knowledge both within and between disciplines, and to build those bridges across programs," he says.

Under the new structure, students will even be able to minor in areas where a specific department doesn't exist, such as International Studies, or Health.

"As the years progress I think we will see a very different degree program landscape [at Laurentian]," Kerr says. ay_veilleux@laurentian.ca

Structure highlights

Specialization-
60 credits in
humanities and
social
sciences

Major- 40
credits

Concentration-
36 credits (for
three-year
degrees only)

Minor- 24
credits

CKLU award voting opens



CKLU's Listeners' Choice Awards are back! Vote for your favorite show on CKLU by emailing PD@cklu.ca.

Vote as many times and as often as you like. The polls close Monday Dec. 6. This year the awards will be presented Thursday, Dec. 9 at the Sudbury Theater Center. Join us between 7-11 pm for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, live music and merriment! Everyone is welcome (age of majority only). Listen to CKLU 96.7 FM, or on line www.cklu.ca

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Presenters give G20 talk in Sudbury

BY SHAILAGH KEANEY

Two community organizers made the northward venture from Toronto to Sudbury to talk about what happened on the streets of Toronto when the G20 met there in June. The pair gave three talks designed for campus and community members at Laurentian and in downtown Sudbury.

Leslie Wood, a professor of Sociology at York University, opened her first talk with some background on the G20, explaining that it is an organization of the world's most influential economies, plus the European Union. She explained it is a body that makes decisions that affect the world's economy and puts in place certain economic regulations that are in line with the current economic status quo, that being capitalism.

As such, Wood put it back to the group why people might be critical of such an organization, and people in the crowd called out words such as "elitist," "secretive," "expensive," and "unrepresentative."

Acknowledging that one of the starkest images that most people have seen of the demonstrations against the G20 is that of a burning police car,

Wood began to explain the multifaceted and mutualistic approach that the demonstrations took on in the lead-up to the G20. The grassroots movement had taken on the forms of a Peoples' Summit, which included workshops and teach-ins, training, including know-your-rights workshops, a media campaign, and themed days of action.

These days were each specifically themed and were titled: "Migrant Justice and an End to War and Occupation, Income Equity and Community Control over Resources," "Gender Justice, Queer Rights, DisAbility Rights," "Environmental and Climate Justice," "Indigenous Sovereignty" and "Days of Action."

Woods showed a clip from Democracy Now that was filmed and compiled by the Vancouver Media Coop, which showed not only the diversity of issues raised, but also the police violence that was experienced by journalists on camera. "These are not the messages that you get in the mainstream news," Woods explained. "And why is that?" she queried.

As a community organizer,

Wood was involved in the Toronto Community Mobilization Network, which coordinated these events. As a Sociology professor, Wood made explicit the context in which summit protests, perhaps unique in the way that they play out, bring together a broad movement of people from different backgrounds and different political affiliations and priorities.

Mac Scott, the other presenter, is an organizer with the Toronto-based Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, which is an organization of poor people and their allies who engage in struggles for economic justice, according to Scott. He agreed that summit protests are areas in which different movements can come together in interesting ways; though OCAP and Toronto-based No One is Illegal have had informal affiliations over the years, the G20 counter-summit was the first place and time that these organizations partnered to organize a day of action.

"The best thing to have come out of the G20 was, by far, the relationships that we have built in our communities," said Scott. "These relationships will be what carries us forward."

Following blogs made easy

BY MATT SOUTHERN

There are hundreds of thousands of blogs out there on the internet, you're bound to run into a few that you like. Maybe even a few dozen or a few hundred. It can be difficult to keep track of them all but there are definitely more efficient ways than bookmarking.

It's a shame when people tell me that they would read blogs more often if they had more time, or they fall a few posts behind and stop visiting the blog because it is overwhelming for them to catch up. When I ask them how they subscribe to these blogs they usually tell me they just have them bookmarked. Well, that's their first problem. Bookmarking is perfect for some people but having to individually visit multiple blogs each day can be cumbersome and time consuming for others.

To help make your blog reading experience as simple and efficient as it can be I'm going to give you three useful tips for keeping track of your favorite blogs:

RSS

By far the easiest way to keep track of blogs is through RSS. In fact, it stands for Real Simple Syndication so that should give you an idea of just how easy it is. There are many RSS readers out there but the one I'm going to recommend to you is Google Reader (www.google.com/reader) because there's no doubt that many of you reading this have a Google

account already. Once you have Google Reader set up, look for the little RSS symbol that will usually be prominently displayed somewhere on the home page (mine is right below the search bar).

After you click on the RSS button you'll be taken to screen that asks you how you want to subscribe. Select Google Reader and you're all set! After you've subscribed to a bunch of blogs all you have to do is select Reader next time you sign in to Google and you'll find all of your favorite blogs in one place. You can easily scan headlines to pick and choose exactly what you want to read if you're short on time. You'll never miss another post from your favorite blog.

E-mail

Most established blogs have the option to sign up via e-mail somewhere on their home page. If you're someone who checks their e-mail frequently (or even just daily) this might be an option to consider. Once you sign up you'll be notified through your e-mail whenever the blog you signed up for has published a new post. Watch what you're signing up for though, if it's a blog that updates multiple times a day then be prepared to get several e-mails from them each day. Not everyone appreciates getting a bunch of e-mails a day from the same place so I would recommend giving your e-mail address to blogs that update once a day or once every few days. Any blog owner who values their

readers would never consider giving your e-mail address to advertisers so don't worry about getting a ton of spam.

Twitter

Almost every blogger has a Twitter account and if they don't, they should. Bloggers love notifying their Twitter followers when a new post has been published so it's always a good idea to follow them to keep up with what they have to say. There are other benefits to following your favorite bloggers on Twitter though. Often they will tweet blog posts that they wrote several weeks or months ago. This is good for them because their old posts won't go unnoticed and it's good for you because you'll get to read some content you might otherwise never have seen. Also, following a blogger on Twitter gives you the opportunity to get to know them as a person. Bloggers (including myself) love to interact with their readers on Twitter so never hesitate to message one of them or give them feedback on there.

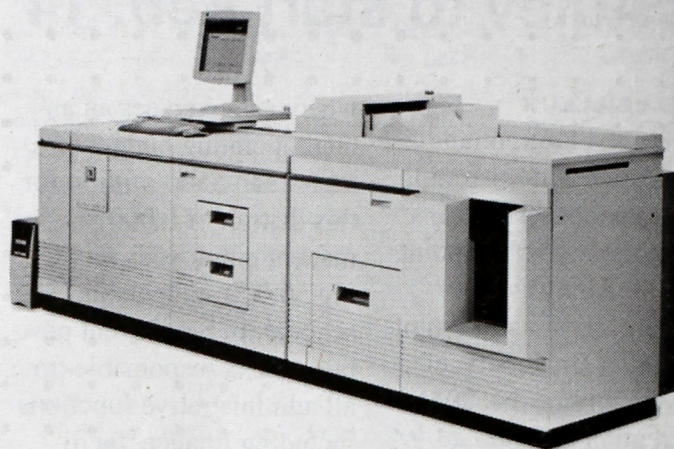
Now then...

After reading this I hope you're already starting to consider new ways to consume blog content easily and efficiently. Please let me know if these tips have been useful to you. Conversely, if you have another tip you'd like add then you're more than welcome to add one in my blog comments.

Find Matt on Twitter at @MattSouthern or visit his blog: MattSouthern.com

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Room W-110, Board Room, West Residence, Laurentian University of Sudbury

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It Came From Netflix: RLD5 - Rave to the Grave

BY ROB HOWELL

Readers, some things are undeniable truths, one of these things is that tits are awesome, they come in all shapes and sizes and pretty much brighten any day. The other truth? Zombies are awesome, come in all shapes and sizes, and brighten my day.

Now I'm not a math major, but it's not rocket science to think that with those two statements that zombie tits would be awesome, right? No, zombie tits are like some fascist 1984 math where $1+1=F*0\%$ you Rob. With that readers, I present my newest run in with Netflix, Return of the Living Dead 5: Rave to the Grave.

Now going into this I actually thought Netflix had actually screwed up and actually put a good movie in my queue. I mean the Romero zombie movies (Night, Dawn, Day, Land, Diary and Survival of the Dead) are probably my favourite non-pornographic movies ever, now I know that the Return series, aren't Romero and instead are the offspring of his partner John Russo (See I know stuff, just not important stuff). But either way the Return series of movies were just as awesome, Return of the Living Dead was nihilistic punk rock awesome and made the great choice of having breasts appear in a movie with zombies, it was like when chocolate met peanut butter, only perkier.

It works though, Return is still one of the most memorable zombie movies and the formula seems almost impossible to screw up.

Rave, other then having a title that seems like a bad Rob Zombie song (Is there a good Rob Zombie song?) found a way to screw up this formula. The plot of the movie revolves around a group of college kids who having gotten their hands on a barrel of the trioxin gas that turns corpses into unstoppable super zombies in the original films. The twist for this film? The gas can be turned into a party drug that's pretty much super E (cleverly called Z) and the zombies are pushovers. This seems like a no brainer movie, college kids get stoned, then fight zombies, seems fool-proof.

No, turns out it's not. See the characters end up teaming up with a pair of Eastern European secret agents/police/whatever the hell they are, who not only chew the scenery like it's sweet delicious Crispy Cream doughnuts, but actually randomly decide to stop following the plot so that they can go to Crispy Cream. It was like the writer just got the thought of having doughnuts and decided that it'd be hilarious if his characters did it too (it wasn't, though now I kind of want doughnuts). But let's get to the important part of the movie, zombie tits.

Really the plots a super weak vehicle to just get college girls to take off their shirts and get eaten by zombies, and really the only people who have a problem with that are the kind of people who stopped reading this article the second they noticed the title said tits. But again boobs are awesome, so there shouldn't be a problem with this, until we start getting zombie boob. Zombie boob is one of those things that just ruins a day, it's like a hurricane made of syphilis, or showing up naked to an exam where everyone else is the cast of Cheers (I'm not the only one with that nightmare, right?), they just suck. In the end that's the best way to sum up Rave, it just sucked.

Honestly readers if you like boobs, watch porn (unless you like Halle Berry boobs, then watch Swordfish) and if you like zombies, then watch The Walking Dead, if you want them together then stack two tv's on top of each other and watch both at the same time. In the end, it'll be better for your sanity (but probably not for your social life). Well that's it for this semester of It Came From Netflix, keep your eyes on the Lambda Wordpress during the Exam period for a few Christmas themed updates to keep you going through the shitty exam season, and remember, I watch these movies so you don't have too (and possibly because I'm a masochist).

Skyline: awesome tentacle aliens versus having a plot

BY ROB HOWELL

I should begin this review pointing out I am a shameless whore for special effects and aliens with tentacles and laser beams (this may or may not be Freudian, I leave that up to you).

Now, due to these things, Skyline should have been an awesome ride. On the other hand, I've heard plot and motivation is a really important part of film, and that's where Skyline fell flat, sure the aliens were there with their crazy blue lights and tentacle attacks, the special effects were pretty jaw dropping, especially in a post-Avatar world of film, but in the end, other than that, nothing happened.

Directed by the Brothers Strauss, Skyline is an independent alien invasion movie that feels like a shaky mash up of Independence Day, Cloverfield, and H.P. Lovecrafts novels (For Lovecraft fans, the aliens of this film are pretty much the Migo if they had smashy robot suits and death vacuums). The movie revolves around the invasion of Los Angeles by brain snatching aliens and really that's all the viewer ever gets to know. The characters spend most of the film trapped in a room watching the aliens outside the room with a telescope and bickering amongst themselves. Sadly, this bickering sets up little bits of plot between the characters that are pretty much forgotten just as fast as they're introduced.

This isn't to say the movie was really that bad though, just that the plot was basically non-existent. On the opposite hand, the action and shiny lights were quite in your face, and I have to

say it was pretty awesome. The Aliens themselves use shiny blue lights and giant people-sucking vacuum spaceships. Which I found to be an interesting take on an alien invasion film, as the aliens seemed to not use direct force as much as sneaky, superior technology. This changed though when the movie decided to crank up the action level, with the aliens ditching their giant vacuums for an army of flying squid monsters, and giant, smashy organic-robots. Like in Cloverfield and Independence Day, these aliens face off against the shootiest technology America can muster, and I have to say it was beautiful. The insane dog-fighting scene between the aliens ships and the Airforces Predator drones and fighter jets, while a Nighthawk stealth bomber goes around being badass made me proud to be an American (and I'm from Southern Ontario, which can make that a kind of hard thing to pull off). Though there are times when the CGI can get a bit overboard, as every time the aliens steal a brain instead of a realistic prop or CGI brain they ramp up the lens flare and have it glow bright blue.

In the end, Skyline is a mixed bag. The plot is pretty flat and you never really get attached to anyone or anything that isn't a fighter jet, but you don't feel ripped off because the movie bombards you with so much mindless action that you forget that nothing's really going on. In the end I would recommend Skyline to anyone who's up for a night of brainless action (see the pun there, 'brainless, the aliens snatch brains...I'm sorry).

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Letter: 14 remembered

BY EMILY CERANTOLA

The Massacre at École Polytechnique in 1989 has become the National Day of Remembrance for Violence against women. In all my years of schooling prior to university, it was always mentioned the same way, emphasizing the horror of what the killer did, his motives and his name. Fourteen women were killed at the school, by a man who believed that feminism ruined his life. With all this focus on the killer, however, the women are all but forgotten, their names briefly mentioned along with their school.

But this isn't about the killer. People should not get famous by killing others, immortalized in newspapers, movies and media. I find it one of the most repulsive and discouraging parts of our culture. Although vigils and memorials are held for the victims, and they are forever memorialized by the National Day of Remembrance for Violence against women, it still does not change the fact that a killer is sensationalized while these women do not receive the recognition and dignity they deserve. They might have been killed by a man with anti-feminist sentiments but they weren't necessarily radical feminists, or even identified with feminism at all; they were simply

female. Of the fourteen women who were killed, 13 were students and one a university employee. Ten other women were injured, as well as four men, before the gunman committed suicide. All of these people sustained gunshot wounds, although one died of being stabbed to death before she could die of her gunshot wound.

The women were targeted because of their sex, because they were women, they were in École Polytechnique and the murderer was not. Blaming women and feminism for his own failure, he killed them. The initial reaction to him was that he was crazy, but this is not true. The killer wasn't clinically insane; he was an angry and sadistic man who was produced by his culture. An extremist, perhaps, but he was still representative of the society that produced him—the very worst parts of his culture, of western culture as a whole.

I was only nine months old when this took place in 1989. Years later when it was talked about in school I asked my mother about it. She remembered that day, and told me she went home and held her babies. My sister and I. It was terrifying, she remembered, looking at her own daughters and seeing something so brutal done

to young women on the news. It is these women who should be remembered. The more I read about this, the worse it becomes. These women were not just students, or university employees but sisters, daughters, friends, lovers and so many things to other people. We cannot forget these women's names. They should be remembered, as should all that have been lost to violence. Being forgotten is not something that should happen to victims, falling to the wayside as we remember their deaths and their killer. We must ensure the victims are always remembered and honoured, not the killers. Otherwise what kind of society can we honestly say we live in?

Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Natalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Barbara Maria Klueznick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Michelle Richard, Sonia Pelletier, Annie Saint-Arnault, Annie Turcotte

The Women's Centre is going to be having a memorial display on December 6th 2010 in the student center. The faces of the women will be in the display, as they should be. It makes them human.

Letter: Time to let the Ombudsman in

BY TABATHA HASKETT

Queen's Park Today, November 15th, 2010, NDP MPP Rosario Marchese introduced an amendment to the Ombudsman Act which wants to expand the mandate of the Ombudsman so that he can do more to protect Ontarians. Marchese has introduced a bill to allow the Ombudsman to investigate complaints about hospitals, long-term care facilities, retirement homes, school boards and Children's Aid Societies (The "MUSH" sector.) "There's this enormous frustration out there. When people with complaints about these public institutions try to get answers, they hit a wall. Ontarians need somewhere to turn when no one else is listening," said Marchese. Indeed, over the last five years, the Ombudsman has been unable to investigate any of the more than 4,000 complaints he has about the following institutions:

Health Care: Year after year, the Ombudsman receives complaints about administrative issues, substandard care, and patient abuse in Ontario's hospitals, retirement homes and long-term care facilities. Yet "the province remains without an independent, effective oversight mechanism to

deal with individual and systematic issues in the health care field," said current Ombudsman Andre Marin. With an aging population and a strained health care system, oversight is now more important than ever.

Schools: Too often, complaints regarding Ontario's schools are swept under the rug. When children are bullied or when students with special needs don't get the resources they need parents have nowhere to turn. "Every week I get calls from parents that are frustrated. They call the Ombudsman and he can't do anything for them. It makes no sense," said Marchese.

Children's Aid Society: Ontario is the only Canadian province not to grant the Ombudsman the power to investigate Children's Aid Societies. When Children's Aid Societies fail to carry out their duties, "families can be broken apart needlessly or children can be deprived of stable foster care or adoptions can fail, or, at times, children can suffer abuse or even die," noted Marin. According to Marin, the complaints regarding the children's aid society covered a broad range of issues and allegations, including:

CAS refusal to investigate, or to thoroughly

investigate, allegations of abuse and neglect;

Concerns about CAS apprehension of children and the care of children in CAS custody or supervision;

Inaccurate CAS records; threatening and harassing conduct on the part of CAS staff; and

CAS refusal to permit access to children in their custody.

Since 2006, some resource has been available to complain about children's aid societies through the Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB). However, we continue to receive complaints about the Board's limited mandate in this area. The Board's focus is on procedural issues rather than substantive concerns about CAS agencies.

Ontario is lagging behind the rest of the country for Ombudsman oversight in the "MUSH" sector and this needs to be changed.

We already have a governmental body to do these investigations; there is no need to re-invent the wheel here. All we have to do is let the Ombudsman do his job.

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Column: The writers' corner

Would you like to know what the two most common grammar errors are? One is the run-on sentence or comma splice, which look like this:

Writing an effective essay can be difficult however it's worth the trouble.

Writing an effective essay can be difficult, however it's worth the trouble.

Do you see the connection? Both sentences are actually two

sentences; the first one has no punctuation at all to connect them, and the second has a comma, the weakest form of punctuation around. Here are some ways these could be corrected:

Writing an effective essay can be difficult; however, it's worth the trouble.

Writing an effective essay can be difficult. However, it's worth the trouble.

Writing an effective essay can be difficult, but it's worth the trouble.

The second most common grammar error? It has to do with agreement: do you see what's wrong here?

She's going to give a stunning lecture; everyone should bring their lunch.

Words like "everyone," "someone," and so on are singular,

but the word "their" is plural; obviously the two don't match. The solution? One is to stay in the singular and use he/she or him/her. Everyone should bring his/her

lunch. A better way, though, is to use the plural: Participants should bring their lunch. You're much less likely to make this mistake if you use the plural.

LU b-ballers split weekend

BY ANDY VEILLEUX

The Laurentian men's basketball team split their weekend games, bringing their overall record to 2-4 this season.

The Voyageurs earned their second victory of the season against Wilfrid Laurier on Friday night with a score of 88-87, but lost their Saturday game against Waterloo 87-71.

Head coach Shawn Swords was happy with his team's overall game, but saw room for improvement in the win.

"We did a good job for three quarters of the game, containing them at half court, executing our game plan and taking away their threes," Swords says. "We did however give up a lot of offensive boards, and it

would have been a bigger spread had we handled those better."

Isiah Pasquale led the team with 32 points. He also contributed eight rebounds. Mike Hull pitched in a double-double with 12 points and 10 rebounds.

The Voyageurs split the previous weekend's games by beating McMaster 80-77, and losing to Lakehead 87-50.

The Voyageurs face off against Guelph and Brock on the road this weekend.

The Lady Vees also split their weekend, bringing their overall record to 1-5 this season.

The Lady Vees picked up their first win of the season beating Waterloo 85-50 Saturday, however, the team lost to Laurier 65-

59 Friday.

Head coach Mike Clarke was happy his team came away with a win, and believes it was an important one for the team.

"We are happy with the win and we were able to do what we wanted to do," Clarke says.

"Everybody that went into the game today was ready to go, so it was a good team win."

Lisa Furchner lit up for 26 points and nine rebounds in the win.

Erin Simpson added 14 points, while Emma Decloe added nine rebounds.

The Lady Vees next see action against Guelph and Brock on the road this weekend.

ay_veilleux@laurentian.ca

Wolves acquire London Knights 25-goal scorer

BY ANDY VEILLEUX

The Wolves pulled the trigger on a big trade Sunday, bringing in forward Michael MacDonald from the London Knights.

MacDonald, a sophomore left wing, put up 25 goals and 20 assists in his rookie season with the Knights.

Wolves head coach Trent Cull spoke about the necessity of bringing in another offensive threat due to the team's current injury woes.

"We have two of our best offensive players on the sidelines for another three weeks," he says.

"We need some offensive help for sure and Michael sounds like he will be a good fit for us moving forward."

Sudbury Wolves General Manager Blaine Smith also acknowledged the offensive contribution MacDonald would bring to the team.

"He scored 25 goals last season so he will certainly help our offence," he says.

Smith also expects the left wing to help out with special teams.

"He will also help us in key situations as he is very good on the penalty-kill," he says.

Smith was not worried about trading a second-round draft pick.

"We acquired draft picks in previous trades with the intention of moving some of them for players that can help us now and in the future," he says.

MacDonald has 17 points in 21 games so far this season. He also played for Team OHL in the Subway Super Series in London, where he added one assist in one game.

MacDonald will make his debut with the Wolves on Friday night against the Soo Greyhounds. Game time is set for 7:30.

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Intramural News

The people who make it happen: Brandon Rienguette

BY MEGAN TEBOGT

Brandon Rienguette is a first year Honours Education student here at Laurentian University. He was originally born in Sudbury but grew up in Windsor. Brandon has been actively involved in several intramural sports since his arrival in September. He has shown outstanding sportsmanship and leadership and thus has been nominated as the Intramural Athlete of the Month.

In the past, Brandon was involved in his high school volleyball, cross-country, hockey, track and field, and baseball teams. His hobbies include break dancing, ping pong, squash, and guitar. He hopes to transfer into the Sport and Physical Education program and upon graduation teach physical education.

The Department of Active Living is thankful for his dedication, motivation and participation. Congratulations Brandon!



Photo Supplied

Brandon Rienguette

Team Trinity New Champs of Intramural Pickle Ball

BY JUSTIN DANECKE

Team Trinity was crowned as champions of the Intramural Pickle Ball league on Monday, November 8 in the Ben Avery Gymnasium. Throughout the round robin Team Trinity was a very consistent and very competitive with all teams. In the playoffs they brought their 'A' game going undefeated on their road to winning the

championship. Honourable mention goes out to the T-Birds who placed second and the Blonde Bombshells who placed third. Thank you to all the teams who came out to play during this busy midterm time. Also, a big thank you to all the referees and score keepers, as the event would not have run as smooth as it did without your help. We could not have done it without our sponsors, Buzzy Browns, Laughing Buddha, Tony V's, Gongas Grill, Flawless Hair Design, Time Hortons, Silk Screeners and the SGA. We hope to see returning faces and more new faces next year for Intramural Pickle Ball 2011.

Laurentian Intramural Volleyball

BY ALEXANDRA

GRBOWSKI-PRETZER

This coming winter sees the return of one of the most popular Intramural Sports on campus; Laurentian University Volleyball (L.U.V) COED 6 x 6 Intramural! It is time to spread the 'L.U.V'! We are offering 3 levels of competition, Recreational, Semi-competitive and

Competitive, with 12 team spots available per level.

Each participant will be provided with a free 'L.U.V' Intramural T-shirt (up to 8 per team). There will be prizes for all levels of skill and spirit. Registration will be from Monday, January 10, 2011 to Friday, January 14, 2011 in the Department of Active Living (Room 109 in the Ben Avery), so have your teams ready to go! The Intramural event begins February 1st and ends on March 15, 2011. Just a reminder that only full-time Laurentian students are eligible to play.

Dust off those knee pads, and dig out your running shoes. There is no better way to get active, have fun and develop new friendships. If you have any questions feel free to contact the Department of Active Living (Ext. 1018 or 1082) or refer to the posters that will soon be posted all over campus. You're going to 'L.U.V' it!

An Event like None Other

BY HALEY PAUL

Looking for something to get your mind off the stress of school? Somewhere where you can get together with friends, meet new people and engage

in friendly competition? Then why not sign-up for Laurentian University's 3x3 Intramural basketball tournament? The event will be taking place at the beginning of February and includes a tournament for everyone; Co-Ed (February 2), Men's (February 7), and Women's (February 9). Each tournament will be taking place in the Ben Avery gymnasium from 9pm until 12am. The cost per team is \$25.00. Registration starts January 10 and runs until January 14. There are only spots for eight teams per tournament, so head over to the Department of Active Living in Room 109 of the Ben Avery early to secure your spot! Do not miss out on this awesome opportunity! There are a number of prizes to be won for the winning team and for individuals that stand out for demonstrating sportsmanship and enthusiasm throughout the event. If you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Active Living (705-675-1151 ext 1018 or 1082) or any of the tournament convenors at: hx_paul@laurentian.ca, cx_colasimone@laurentian.ca, or kv_cousineau@laurentian.ca.

We hope to see you there!

Wolves outbattle Battalion

BY JOHN LANGDON

The Sudbury Wolves ended their weekend on a positive note by defeating the Brampton Battalion 2-1 on Saturday night at the Sudbury Community Arena.

Mike Lomas netted a pair of goals for Sudbury, while Stephon Thorne scored the lone goal for Brampton.

The Battalion generated the majority of offence, tallying a total of 42 shots on goal.

However, Wolves goaltender Alain Valiquette was stellar between the pipes with 41 saves in the win.

"I was able to make some saves to keep my team in there and we were able to come out on top. So, it feels good," said the veteran netminder.

Sudbury was held to only 18 shots on goal, but managed to earn a tight win over their Central Division rival.

The Wolves drew first blood at 6:23 of the first period when Lomas broke the deadlock.

The left winger received a pass from linemate Andrey Kuchin and fired a low shot from inside the left circle that beat Brampton goaltender Jacob Riley.

Despite being outshot 14-6 in the first period, Sudbury carried a 1-0 lead into the intermission.

The Battalion offence continued to apply pressure

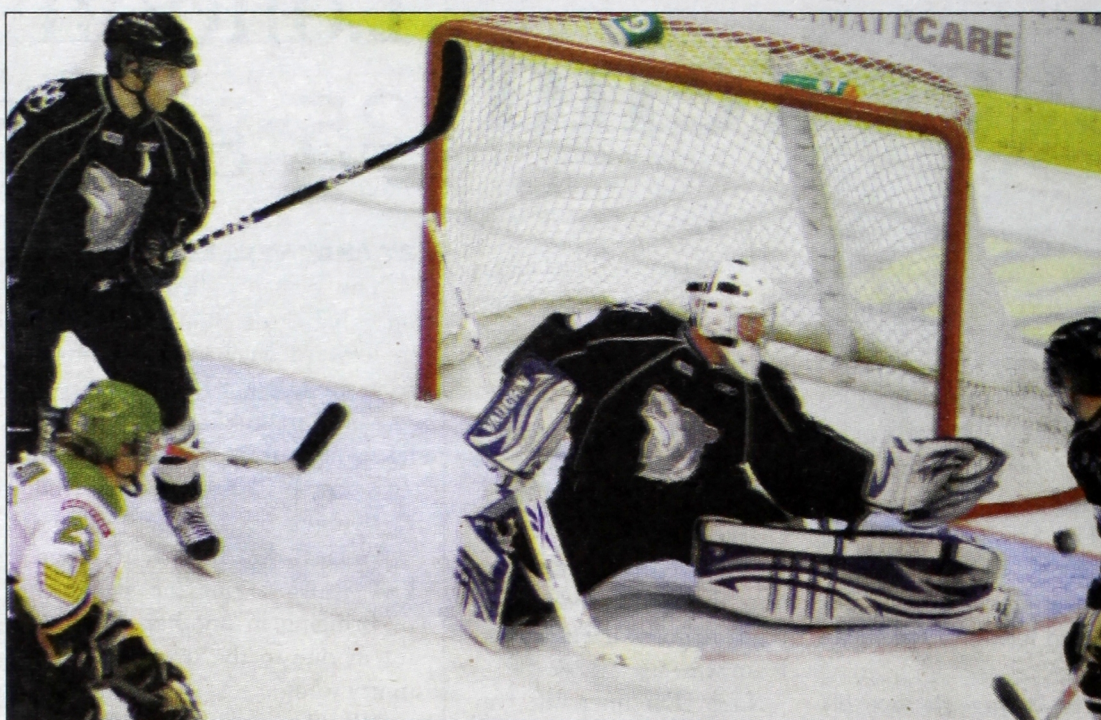


Photo by Andy Veilleux

Wolves goaltender Alain Valiquette makes a kick save in action Saturday. He made 41 saves in the win.

during the early stages of the second frame.

Brampton failed to capitalize on a five on three power play, because of the sensational goaltending of Valiquette.

Brampton scored at 15:58 of the second period when Stephon Thorne was awarded a questionable penalty shot.

The Battalion forward made

no mistake as he beat Valiquette one-on-one with a quick release on the short side.

Sudbury fans did not agree with the call, nor did Wolves head coach Trent Cull.

"I just disagree with the call," Cull said.

"[The on-ice officials] came and gave me an explanation after, and I said I appreciate the

explanation but I completely don't agree."

There were no indications the goal affected Valiquette's focus as the Wolves goaltender continued his strong play into the third period.

The score remained even until 17:06 in the third period when Lomas netted his second goal of the game by jumping on a loose

rebound in front of the Brampton net.

Kuchin picked up his second point of the game while Josh McFadden contributed the other assist.

The go-ahead goal came on the power play after Brampton center Sam Carrick was called for interference.

The Wolves went one for three with the man-advantage while Brampton failed to capitalize on five power play opportunities.

Lomas now leads the Wolves with 15 goals and 25 points in 23 games this season.

This was the second meeting between the two teams.

Brampton (8-10-4) won the first meeting in October by handing Sudbury a 5-1 loss.

The win on Saturday night not only evens the season series at 1-1 but also brings the Wolves (7-15-1) to within five points of the Battalion in the Central Division standings.

The Wolves lost to the Owen Sound Attack 4-1 on Friday, after a third period collapse in which they allowed three goals.

The Wolves host the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds on Friday, November 26 at Sudbury Community Arena at 7:30 pm.

(With files from Andy Veilleux)

Despite OHL wins, CHL loses series

BY ANDY VEILLEUX

Casey Cizikas scored a short-handed goal in the third period, and Marcus Foligno scored the shootout winner, as Team OHL defeated Team Russia 2-1 in Subway Super Series action Monday night.

Cizikas laughed at the irony of being cheered by Sudbury fans for his goal considering he scored a goal the preceding Friday when his Mississauga St. Michael's Majors beat the Sudbury Wolves 8-4.

"It was a surprise," he admits.

Cizikas was impressed with the Sudbury fans tonight.

"The fans were great tonight; they came out and they supported us."

The fans were especially noisy when hometown captain Foligno took the ice for his shootout attempt.

"I didn't hear the whistle before the penalty shot, because it was so loud," Foligno says.

Even though the shootout move was all Foligno, he gave credit to his teammates.

"It was a perfect end to the night and I couldn't have done it without those guys in the room."

Cizikas also acknowledged the strong unity amongst Team

OHL, and the way they came together to get the win.

"In the change room before the third, we came together as a team," he says.

"We got pucks deep, we did what we had to do, and came away with the win."

Team OHL outshot Russia 31-1 in the third period, and 39-22 during the game.

"[The Russians] were super skilled, and they were a lot bigger than the Russians I had played in previous years and previous tournaments."

-OHL Defenseman Erik Gudbranson

Cizikas' goal was the turning point in the game, as the team could not solve goaltender Igor Babkov prior to it.

"I just saw the puck hop up there and I did a move I do all the time," he says.

He believes it was one of the "highlight moments" in his career so far.

Defenseman Erik Gudbranson was impressed with the Russians.

"[The Russians] were super skilled, and they were a lot bigger

than the Russians I had played in previous years and previous tournaments."

He was especially impressed by their physical game.

"They were very physical," he says. "They played a Canadian-style game."

Foligno was impressed with their speed.

"The speed of the game was a little different, those Russian are pretty fast," he says.

He was also impressed with Babkov's performance.

"He was amazing, he almost hit forty shots and we only got one by him," he says.

Babkov turned away 38 of the 39 shots he faced.

Team OHL's Mark Visentin of the Niagara IceDogs stopped 17 of 17 shots, while Mississauga's JP Anderson stopped four of five.

Gudbranson believes the Russians had an advantage entering the game.

"We played all weekend, and they had the weekend off, so winning today was definitely huge," he says.

Foligno was in good spirits after playing so much hockey the past few days.

"This is my four [games] in



Photo by Andy Veilleux

Marcus Foligno scored the game-winning shootout goal in Team OHL's 2-1 win over Team Russia in Subway Super Series action.

four nights, so I think I'm going to sleep in until 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon," he jokes.

Artem Voronin scored a second period goal for the Russians.

Captain Ryan Ellis, and Joey Hishon also scored for Team OHL in the shootout.

Maxim Kitsyn was the lone shootout scorer for the Russians.

Jordan Szwarcz was called in to replace the Wolves' John McFarland after he was ruled

out due to an injury sustained in OHL action against Mississauga Friday night.

Team Russia went on to win the Super Series 4-2, after defeating Team QMJHL and Team WHL twice.

This is the first time in the eight years the Super Series has happened that Russia won.

Team OHL has not lost to Team Russia in the 16 games they've played against each other. ay_veilleux@laurentian.ca